



Lakes Area – General Meeting – 20.11.2019 - Minutes

Follows immediately after AGM
EAGLE AND CHILD - STAVELEY, NEAR KENDAL

1. Welcome and introductions by Chairman.

17 in attendance with apologies from –

Mark Thompson, Mary Breakell-Rose, Stu Smith, Al Phizacklea, Alan Hinkes, Max Biden

2. Talk by Stephen Trotter CEO Wildlife Trust:

What could the return of beavers do for Cumbria ?

- Beavers were the fastest declining mammal in the UK and extinct in the 1600's
- Glover Report highlights that the National Parks should have access for all but not necessarily good for nature.
- Buzzards and Otters on the increase but not all wildlife are so – the responses are Too Small and Too Fragmented to restore the environment. The response needs to be Bigger, Better and Joined Up.
- All spare spaces are important for nature
- We need a new Environmental Act for the 21st Century
- **Beavers** – should be at the heart of nature and are much misunderstood
- They are vegetarian and do not eat fish
- Their teeth are their most important aspect
- They build dams to raise the water level – for their protection
- Have a dramatic effect on the environment with the dams being important for the water flow system and helps to slow the flow – and it comes free !
- Benefits
 - Improved water quality – with long sequence of small pools
 - More wildlife
 - More people engaged and increase in Nature Tourism
 - Reduced flooding as land holds back/more water
- But bad reputation – often with misconceptions -
 - Concern of fishermen – however they don't eat fish and ponds are good for fish
 - No evidence of bad effect on fish – fish can swim through the dams
- Beavers reintroduced into Europe over last 20 years
 - Help with healthy salmon population
 - Mitigate issues
 - They tend to dam tributaries and streams
 - Need small trees nearby to make dams (approx up to 10m from water) – can fence off trees if there are issues.
 - Concerned farmers have gone to Austria to see effect of beavers and can see coexisting with humans and other life there
 - There is disease but all animals introduced have been checked
- Following introductions into UK
 - Knapdale (Scotland) in 2009 – 11 beavers
 - Devon – 2011 – 8 families (Devon Wildlife Trust – Reports available)
 - Kent – 2001
 - Cornwall
 - Forest of Dean - Forestry Commission /Defra
 - Pickering - Forestry Commission /Defra

Lakes Area – General Meeting – 20.11.2019 - Minutes

- Tayside - unofficial
 - Proposals for Lake District
 - Slow the flow of rivers - evidence of smoothing flows of rivers with fluctuating rainfalls
 - Clean freshwater system
 - Create nature tourism
 - Keystone species
 - Benefits for other wildlife species
 - Native fauna
 - Legal responsibility
 - Moral and philosophical duty
 - Proposal for 3 sites in the Lake District
 - Must be a site with trees
 - These are private sites
 - Create a beaver partnership
 - Can't say where at the moment
 - Also possibility of site in Ennerdale
 - No natural predators – other than humans - building up experience and be aware of problems
- 3. Minutes of the previous meeting.**
- Agreed
- 4. Matters arising from those minutes not included in the Agenda.**
- (7) Ken Taylor and Rik Outhwaite involved with attending meetings re Lake District
 - (8) Report of footpath construction still outstanding
 - Action point - Report of path construction be brought together**
 - (11) Bolts at Thornhow Crag and Martindale Hause Crag had been replaced by the Cumbria Bolt Fund on a like for like basis with not extension to trad routes. Twin belays put in place.
 - (11) Still outstanding re abseil stations
 - Action – Suggestion that a paper be put together for future consideration about bolted abseil points**
 - (15) Information on BMC website about courses around the country
- 5. BMC National Council Report, by NC member - see (6)**
- 6. BMC - update on the work and recommendations by the ODG (Org' development group)**
Fiona Sanders reported as follows –
- Main parts of ORG to NC/Board - papers being processed re Delivery of Competition climbing and Wales
 - Much has been and is being done re ORG – by volunteers and also BMC staff
- 7. Extending the influence of BMC lakes; LDNPA and Lake District Partnership - Rik Outhwaite and Ken Taylor.**
- Attendance at meeting and liaison re replies in connection with ongoing matters
 - Draft Local Plan for LDNP
 - Comments sent in and have some influence.

Lakes Area – General Meeting – 20.11.2019 - Minutes

- Inspector will visit area and Rik Outhwaite will attend for two days relevant to BMC issues
- Local plan sets planning policy – next year will be Lake District Management Plan
- There seems to be two alternative ‘visions’ for the LDNP:
 1. A push for ever higher visitor numbers by encouraging/allowing a wide array of tourism infrastructure developments, then implementing a variety of management measures to cope with the influx, particularly transport/traffic related ones. This is the vision of LDNPA, and is consistent with Glover review and government policy. There has been indication of increasing visitor numbers, currently at 19 million, by 2% per annum to 35 million !!!
 2. Take a view that there is, or must logically be, a finite limit to what an area can cope with, aka a “carrying capacity”, and that the Lakes are at or close to this already at busiest times of the year. Consequently, we should limit developments that will attract yet more visitors and look to implement some management measures (especially transport/traffic ones) to cope with existing peaks. This is, in effect, the view put forward by BMC and FOLD in their responses to the Local Plan Review. The view that the Lakes is already at capacity traffic-wise is shared by many local residents and businesses.
- Ken T and Rik O want a feeling of the Lakes area as to how it feels about the above.
- Concern that the Business Model puts pressure on the housing stock, with low paid jobs
- We need to manage what we have for the area - Unesco says it is necessary to look after the Lake District for the long term – not the short term
- Unesco can delisted the area as a World Heritage Site – some see that this would be a good thing
- Glover Report indicates more Rangers and a wider Ethnic coverage – but there is no more funding !!
- LDNPA looking to partner with commercial organisations – which gives concerns as to what the “partner” wants !
- BMC has position on the Lake District Partnership Board which is drawing up the Management Plan
- Looking at Traffic Free valleys – but need appropriate infrastructure etc.
- Important to use Climate/Ecological Emergency Declaration to influence thinking and decision making
- Encourage use of electric bikes
- 80% of emissions in the Lakes are from visitors
- In European Valley – discount cards given to those who travel by public transport.
- Consider idea of bedroom tax – e.g. on all accommodation (including huts) per night –
 - Up to £19.99 - 50p per night
 - £20 - £49.99 - £1 per night
 - £50 and above - £1.50
- Available for free bus travel throughout; funding Fix the Fells; more information centres, local housing
- Extreme weather events focusing concerns
- Balance of Protectionism against Looking for expansion

8. Access updates and news - James Bumby -



Lakes Area – General Meeting – 20.11.2019 - Minutes

- Nesting restrictions have worked well this year – and thanks to all – with no issues. Better information coming in about nest sites. National Park and English Nature are very supportive
9. **Cumbria Bolt Fund (CBF)** Ron Kenyon and Dan Robinson.
- Rebolting and bolting progressing at Runestone Quarry and looking at Tilberthwaite
 - New easy routes to be created at Scout Scar
 - Donation made by Lakeland Climbing Foundation of £1500 to CBF
 - Donations over time from FRCC; local Clubs; Rockfax and Commercial organisations
 - Necessary to have trained bolters – would welcome those trained in the past to come and help with bolting and rebolting (particularly at Scout Scar)
 - More hands/bolters make light work.
 - Replacement of abseil equipment with year dated equipment.
- 10 **Clubs report** - Ged Campion
- Ged is concentrating on contacting Clubs which have huts in the Lakes Area
 - He would welcome someone else to help with the Clubs
- 11 **Youth Development** - Ali Wood
- No Report
- 12 **Hill Walking Representative and Hill Walking Issues** - Stu Smith
- Highlighting National Hill Walking Synopsis in the Lake District on 15/16-03-2020 – organised by Peter Judd
- 13 **BMC Volunteer Awards** Fiona Sanders
- The Lakes Area would welcome ideas BMC members for Awards at next AGM. Email going out to all members
 - Categories –
 - Young Person Award
 - George Band Award
 - Rehan Siddiqui Award
- 14 **BMC Lakes Fest 2020**
- Ron Kenyon reported on developments of Lakes Fest on weekend of 10/11th September 2020
- 15 **Any Other Business.**
- None
- 16 **Next Meeting**
- 11/03/2020 - venue to be decided

The BMC was founded in 1944 with membership open to all, "regardless of race, ethnicity, religious belief, sexuality or socioeconomic status".

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/a-brief-history-of-the-bmc>